

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended): A structure of an end portion of a flat cable in which a plurality of juxtaposed conductors are sheathed and insulated, respectively, wherein the sheathed and insulated end portion of the flat cable has a stepped form so that end surfaces of at least adjacent ones of the conductors are positioned in different planes;

wherein no immediate adjacent ones of the conductors of the flat cable are in the same plane.

2. (previously presented): The structure according to claim 1, wherein the end portion of the flat cable is in the stepped form so that the end surfaces of the conductors are alternately positioned in a staggered manner.

3. (currently amended): A method of processing an end portion of a flat cable in which a plurality of juxtaposed conductors are sheathed and insulated, respectively, the method comprising the step of:

cutting the sheathed and insulated end portion of the flat cable in a stepped form so that cut surfaces of at least adjacent ones of the conductors are positioned in different planes;

wherein no immediate adjacent ones of the conductors of the flat cable are in the same plane.

4. (original): The method according to claim 3, wherein the end portion of the flat cable is cut in the stepped form so that the cut surfaces of the conductors are alternately positioned in a staggered manner.

5. (original): The method according to claim 4, wherein the flat cable is collectively cut along a widthwise direction of the flat cable by using a cutter blade having a blade shape in which rectangular sections continue in a zigzag manner.

6. (currently amended): An apparatus comprising:
a flat cable in which a plurality of juxtaposed conductors are sheathed and insulated;
wherein ~~an~~ a sheathed and insulated end portion of the flat cable is in a stepped form so that the end portion of at least adjacent ones of the conductors are positioned in different planes;
wherein no immediate adjacent ones of the conductors of the flat cable are in the same plane.

7. (previously presented): An apparatus according to claim 6, wherein the end portion of the flat cable is in the stepped form so that the end portions of the conductors are alternately positioned in a staggered manner.

8. (withdrawn): A structure according to claim 1, further comprising:
a holding member comprising a pair of lock arms; and
a connector body, wherein a plurality of insulation displacing blades are housed at a rear end face of the connector body,
wherein a pair of retaining projections are provided projecting on both side surfaces of the connector body,

wherein said pair of lock arms are retained by said pair of retaining projections so that the holding member is fitted to the connector body in such a manner as to clamp the end portion of the flat cable between the holding member and the rear end face of the connector body in a widthwise direction, and

wherein the end portion of the flat cable is not even.

9. (withdrawn): A structure according to claim 8, further comprising:
a cable bending portion which extends in a direction perpendicular to the rear end face of the connector body projects from a lower edge of the rear end face of the connector body; and
wherein said cable bending portion bends the flat cable orthogonally.

10. (withdrawn): A structure according to claim 8, wherein said connector body is L-shaped.

11. (previously presented): A structure according to claim 1, wherein said flat cable further comprises:

a flexible flat cable.

12. (new): An apparatus comprising:
a flat cable in which a plurality of juxtaposed conductors are sheathed and insulated;
wherein a sheathed and insulated end portion of the flat cable is in stepped form so that the end portions of at least three conductors are positioned in different planes from immediate adjacent conductors.